



reading time 60-80 min

BLUEMOON AGAIN (?)

NOTES ON addiction,
psychotropic devices, and
altered states of political consciousness

in 1972, [redacted] CIA
[redacted] Italy, called "Blue
Moon", [redacted]
narcotic substances among the
[redacted] destabilizing
the protest movement during the
[redacted] "Strategy of
Tension". [redacted] today?

by Z.R.

feb 2025

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BLUEMOON AGAIN (?)

**NOTES ON addiction, psychotropic devices,
and altered states of political consciousness**

by Z.R.

“BlueMoon Again (?) Annotazioni su
tossicodipendenza, dispositivi psicotropi e
stati alterati di coscienza politica”

february 2025

edited by Robin Book Gang

translated in (bad, not sorry for that)
english by Robin Book Gang

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COPYRIOT

*To those we have lost,
and those we may find again.*

INTRODUCTION

“I’m blue da ba dee daba daee”

— Eiffel 65, *A decade in blue*, 1999

This text has been sitting on my desk for at least three years. For a long time, it was just a messy pile of notes and sentences partially erased by old tears. Finally, I am sober enough to be able to clearly address what I would like to share in the most understandable way possible.

All this has nothing to do with empathy or testimony, but with suspicions and hypotheses that I no longer wish to keep private or verbal. I cannot hide the personal and probably distorted nature of my perceptions, but too many conversations in which I tried to investigate the subject only added pieces to a single puzzle. A disturbing puzzle that I can say with certainty is present in the minds of many people but which, as far as I know, is not currently being discussed. Especially in the Movement circles.

This is therefore neither an essay nor an investigation, but rather an understanding of pain that is both individual and collective, so political, starting from a partial and fragmented experience that I have tried to frame in a perspective of continuity with the past, without any claim to truth or certainty, and without wishing to universalize or direct the discussions and issues that may be linked to it. As a politically aligned person, aware of the hypothetical circuit within which this text has the possibility of circulating and of the limitations of my perspective, I have chosen to circumscribe the following reflections within an *antagonistic and militant* perimeter. It is not my intention to generalize, to speak about experiences I do not know, of which I do not have the necessary knowledge, or to substitute myself for marginalized communities to which I do not belong and which I cannot, nor do I want to, represent. I would only like to contribute and participate in a discussion that I consider too low-key, in the hope of amplifying its importance and encouraging other possible expressions.

Personally, I believe that everything is connected, that every individual action and thought influences and is influenced by the actions and thoughts of others, that there is no separation between the individual and society. This means that we can have power over our own lives and that, in the same way, that power is our own personal negotiation with the power of others: it is up to each of us to choose how to relate to *the own and the other's*. Given the strength I feel I have now, writing down what I think and surrendering these reflections to the ungovernability of their potential development is the way I have found to break the loneliness and isolation that anyone who has experienced drug addiction in their own way feels.

I use the word *toxic addiction*¹ because what I want to try to explain does not really concern so-called narcotic² (psychoactive) substances, but social relationships in a broader, even pathological context. As I will try to elaborate, a very important aspect of this whole discussion is narration, the words used, but I am not a doctor or even a sociologist, so it is possible that I will use some of them improperly. The vocabulary related to this topic is very broad and specific, but I have chosen to adapt it to everyday language and my own expertise. [NDT: words and their usage is cultural and social, so many of the reflections expressed here could lack of a specific and properly translation for the English-speaking contexts]

I know that in some ways what you will read in the second part of this text may seem like yet another conspiracy theory or pure speculation... as with much of what we have been able to learn from sources considered reliable, we will never be certain of the absolute truthfulness of their testimonies, nor can I, with the few tools at my disposal, claim to prove anything with irrefutable facts. I would like to make one thing clear: I do not intend to suggest or point the finger at anyone or demand any kind of “justice” in this regard. As I said earlier, personal responsibilities and collective influences are difficult to identify clearly, even though we know that we do not all

1. the word “tossicodipendenza” in Italian is related to human relations and also addiction in general, not only drugs.

2. in italian “narcotics” are called “stupefacenti” or “sostanze stupefacenti”, literally translated in “amazing, astonishing” substances and it take its name after the medical term (from Latin) “stupor”, but the classification of “stupefacente” is more legal than pharmacological.

have the same weight on this planet and that those burdens vary from context to context, we must choose. And each of us can choose who is responsible for what and to what extent, but that choice is not mine to make. Not here and not like this, at least.

TOXIC ADDICTION VS. TOXIC ADDICTS

“Every city is a narcotic city”

– motto from www.narcotic.city

On the same day my mother released me from her womb, Italian cinemas released *Trainspotting*. When I became old enough to appreciate it, the first episodes of *Skins* began to be broadcast in Italian. I spent my time listening to DSA Commando and Truceklan.³

During the same period, our adolescence was marked by the arrival of social networks and an intense period of political unrest among young people. Both of these things had a profound effect on me. There was a strong urge to meet up and travel; it seemed that something important was happening everywhere and we had to be part of it. There was a lot of enthusiasm and determination in the air: occupations, parties, marches, concerts, endless assemblies, T.A.Z. and free parties punctuated our weeks, while half the world was in revolt. Home was a semiunknown place, hospitable only when ‘my parents weren’t there’; otherwise, days and nights were spent on the streets or on public transport (especially for those who came from the provinces like me). I would sometimes not return home for days, sometimes weeks.

Being part of a militant political group played a significant role in this, we “*ranned away from home*” (regardless of our political involvement) had access to a range of emotions and contexts that most of our peers knew little or nothing about it or couldn’t even imagine it. Clashing with police and having sex went hand in hand; it was very easy to go from having your head bashed in by a baton to dancing like there was no tomorrow in some squat or social centers⁴

3. Two Italian iconic rap-hardcore groups from the 2000-’10.

4 “centri sociali” in Italy was/is a very important form of political (far/alt left) organization

within a few hours. Hanging out in politicized circles meant meeting lots of different people, often older, people with whom you weren't just going to a great concert, but with whom you shared a *certain spirit*.

That strange mixture of tensions and passions allowed you to interact with a world of consumption that was completely different from the watered-down cocktail paid for at a fortune on a Saturday night by any ordinary teenager. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that frequenting "liberated" autonomous spaces automatically leads to nothing, only that *autonomy* has a range of possibilities that differ from "normal" contexts. Self-proclaimed liberated places are easily more susceptible and prone to discovering both the sublime beauty of possibilities beyond *the permitted* and its horrors. But apart from that, sooner or later, in one way or another, everyone finds themselves suppressing their need for escape through consumption or some kind of addiction. Except that most of the people around us do so through socially accepted means, *tolerated* rather than strictly legal. Paradoxically, it is precisely in the unregulated aspects (at least from a legal point of view) common to the whole human experience that we can see the toxicity in each of our lives—I mean interpersonal relationships.

Ours is a civilization built on addiction: except for a few rare cases, our relationships revolve around dynamics that make us feel bad, from which we cannot free ourselves and which in turn produce vicious circles of equally toxic reactions and relationships, easily turning violent. One above all? Work. Produce, consume, die. It's always the same story. In all honesty, I don't think there is a millennial (or subsequent generation) who is not aware of this. In one way or another, we are all toxic addicts. Consumer society would not exist without it, just as it would not exist without slaves.

But an toxic addict (tossicodipendente) is not someone who satisfies their needs through the systematic abuse of substances or relationships or behaviors. It's something different: **the toxic addict is a specific social category** that is not directly associated with a certain type and mode of consumption. It is first and foremost an element associated with degradation, with a broken 'decency', an obvious deviation from a socially understood and accepted concept of healthy, and therefore of health and wholesomeness – of goodness.

I believe that if we tried, alone or in a group, to graphically map out terms related to *decorum*, we would find ourselves with a very broad spectrum of concepts ranging from security to productivity, from social expectations (regarding family, wealth, work, etc.) to aesthetics, to a whole series of attitudes, behaviors, and human figures. And, of course, their opposites.

The toxic addict is first and foremost **a category of negative**. It is a figure whose position within this map is clearly opposed to the concepts of *decorum*. At best, the kindest association we can make with the word is sick, or troubled, even though the term sick is loaded with socially connoted pejorative meanings and having problems is certainly not a compliment.

Toxic addicts, like everything else, are deeply characterized by the **patterns of systems of domination**: depending on who you are (and how you have been socialized), this deviance is more or less forgiven, more or less judged, and more or less "managed." Class, race, and gender are the pillars of how addiction is interpreted, narrated, and addressed: the identity of the toxic addict is definitely more relevant than their "private history," as in the narrative of merit and privilege, the abilities and possibilities of "drying out" are inseparable from the structures of domination. I don't think it's necessary to elaborate further on this point.

Only in the end the toxic addict is considered as such based on the object of his abuse. Even if (drug) addiction is defined as a "**behavioral pathology** that develops after chronic and compulsive use and abuse of substances," i.e., a particular dependence linked to the use of certain substances, you don't need to have studied the *DSM* (the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*) to understand that toxic addiction is a disorder linked to many things. Most of us do not speak the clinical language, but we orient and interpret them based on our own context. Try saying out loud: "you are a junkie" or "you are a drug addict" or "you have an addiction to..." focusing on each of these, you will notice that they have very different nuances while remaining within the same sphere of meaning (toxicity).

What I am trying to say (probably poorly) is that although the term "toxic addict" has a more pathologizing connotation than "junkie" and is more socially connoted than "having an addiction to," its use

in reference to an individual who exhibits the behavioral disorders of addiction—compulsion to seek and take drugs; loss of control in limiting intake; appearance of a negative emotional state when access is denied—is primarily related to the level of visible dysfunction and the social background of the individual in question, not to the object (substance, behaviors, or relationships) of the addiction itself. For a very simple reason: if our judgment system were based primarily on the behavioral disorders typical of drug addiction... well... we would understand, each in our own way, that we are all in big trouble.

This is precisely the point, we know it very well, but we need to inscribe the phenomenon within the parameters of civil society, that is, of decency and of *the social contract*, so that we can project the 'disorder', as far as we can, *outside* ourselves, drawing a dividing line between good and bad, between me and them. The poisonous reality of the social dynamics within which we live is by no means a deviation or disturbance of a hypothetical concept of social health; it is the norm/ality of every relationship of domination. The toxic addict is not *just* a person who exhibits the aforementioned pathological behaviors, but a very specific social construct: they are not at all like a cancer patient, who, poor things, did not choose their condition. The drug addict is the "civilian" equivalent of the *terrorist*, a person who *deliberately* breaks the limits of what is permitted by embarking on a self/destructive path from which it is difficult to escape. They are a public enemy who bears a wholly personal responsibility and is treated as such.

PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES AND PSYCHOTROPIC DEVICES

Before delving into what might appear to be a risky parallel, I would like to say a few things about psychoactive substances, because, although I have tried to propose a different view of drug addiction, it would be remiss not to address the issue.

Let's make it short: the consumption of psychoactive substances is an integral part of everyday life. Pharmacology defines psychoactive substances as all those chemicals that have a psychotropic effect, i.e., that are capable of altering a person's mental and physical state by acting on emotions, memories, attention, perception, mood, consciousness, behavior, intellectual abilities, motor skills, etc. For

millennia, humanity (but even some non-human animals indulge in these activities) has used these substances for an incredible variety of purposes. In Italy, the term "stupefacente" (ndt: narcotics) - which etymologically refers to the ability to induce a stuporous state, denoting psychoactive substances as capable of causing tolerance, addiction, and dependence - has a more legal than pharmacological meaning: ethanol (alcohol), caffeine, nicotine, and benzodiazepine, despite being psychoactive substances, are not considered narcotics despite having all the characteristics of such substances, and are not classified as such because they are regulated by laws.

"Outside the world of drugs, each of us takes steps every day to prevent illness and improve our health and safety. We brush our teeth, wear seat belts, use condoms, and exercise. We don't call it harm reduction: we call it common sense, prevention, education, or some other neutral name. The point is that the term harm reduction is used almost exclusively in relation to drug use and has negative connotations."
— Carl L. Hart, *Drug Use for Grown-Ups*, 2021

"The truth about drugs cannot cause harm. It may offend some people's sensibilities and disturb those who don't want to listen, but it cannot hurt people. On the other hand, false information can and often does lead people to harm themselves or others."
— A. Weil and R. Winifred, *Chocolate to Morphine*, 1983

Personally, I don't believe there is a universal truth about drugs. I firmly believe that everything, every word and every substance can take on diametrically opposed meanings depending on the context and perspective, on who you are deep down. Of course, clinical studies and analysis of the effects of substances, as well as greater availability of information on the subject, can help to broaden our understanding of a phenomenon, but this does not mean much in terms of personal experience, especially if we keep in mind that most people who use drugs are not *psychonauts*, are not interested in being psychonauts, and very likely have no idea what the hell that means.

The quotes I have mentioned above are interesting because they indirectly raise a narrative issue: the **negative connotations** surrounding the *world of drugs* and the **misinformation** that surrounds them. As I mentioned, words are not never entirely neutral, their

magic (read: power) lies precisely in this: they influence behavior.

It is undeniable that psychoactive substances have both positive and negative potential, which is well documented, but there is nothing inherently positive or inherently negative about taking them. As far as I am concerned, even abuse is not automatically a "bad" thing, although it clearly has its consequences. The positivity or negativity of an experience is a personal and time-dependent fact; it is not enough to be aware of the risks *of life*; it cannot be universalized. It depends. If this were not the case, we would all have the same experiences. What kind of person you are, how familiar you are with danger and risk, what and how solid your protective tools are (your social network or circle of trust, for example), how much you suffer from the opinions of others and how much you want to conform to the context you are in or how suffocating it is for you... these are all things that are not insignificant when we talk about the struggles we encounter on our paths. Today's trauma could be tomorrow's strength or creativity, but it is not automatic; it depends.

Public opinion is a determining factor in this discussion, because it embodies the elusive moral orientation of right and wrong, that nauseating and constant cacophony that, when debating anything, never says anything other than "obey," even if it is not clear what or whom to obey. Growing up in a highly conflictual environment was a decisive factor for me, both in terms of having access to substances and, above all, in dealing with their abuse.

The substances in question are almost entirely irrelevant. On the one hand, opposition or rebellion, if you will, against society brought me closer to all those categories of deviance I mentioned a few pages ago, and when you end up on the side of the "bad guys," it is easy for a reversal of values to occur that leads you to consider positive what "the system" stigmatizes or criminalizes, especially at the behavioral level—it becomes romanticized. Only as I grew up, I realized that systems of oppression and domination exist both inside and outside all of us, both individually and collectively. On the other hand, being part of a stubborn and annoying—*anti-social*—minority has allowed me to understand how much baseness, pain, and defeat are indispensable parts of a life lived to the fullest and of struggle. But we are not educated in an approach to pain or trauma that is not repressive and individual, much less in mutual and collective care, and even less in conflictuality.

"In our public and private lives, the very idea of conflict has been banned. Or, more precisely, we tend to be intolerant of any form of opposition and conflict, effectively blinding ourselves to the positive, progressive aspects of social and individual growth that 'conflict' encompasses. [...] The removal of conflict, the denial of its unavoidable nature, and indeed of its positive corollary in human experience, carries with it the risk of pathologizing all dissent and criminalizing all divergence."

— Miguel Benasayag and Angélique Del Rey, *Elogio del conflicto* (*Éloge du conflit*), 2007

If there is one thing that all stories and experiences of toxic addicts have in common, it is precisely that lack of conflict. I have been fortunate in this regard, and I realize that I have informally received a very special education in conflict that is not available to most people; indeed, it is systematically denied to them. There is no doubt that the "tragedies" associated with addiction are often related to exclusion, isolation, or a sense of loneliness, but it is not necessarily true that they correspond to a complete lack of meaningful bonds of care or trust. I believe that what is missing is more of **an intimate and practical understanding of conflict**, brutality, and violence. When I think about what it meant to "drying out", I associate it with an insurrectionary image of violent insubordination to a totalitarianism that is primarily internal, at least for me. Blood, sweat, tears, shit, vomit, and all the rest do not guarantee anything in themselves. There are no recipes for doing so; changing one's habits is inevitably painful and never ever really ends.

I do not want to overlook the significance of the effects resulting from the use/abuse of a substance; we are aware of them and they are at the center of the discussion, but I cannot pretend that there are not far more significant forces at work in transforming a user (assuming that there can be such a thing as a "healthy" user) into an addict. *Harm and risk reduction is a set of approaches, policies, services, and actions that aim to limit and reduce the harm associated with the use of legal and illegal substances on several levels: health, social, and economic. The approach is nonjudgmental and stigma-free, but focused on information and exchange with the aim of reducing and containing any harm and risks associated with substance use.* Yet, as important as this type of intervention may be, every time I find myself discussing it, we end up talking about something else: how violent is the society we live in? How much

does it contribute to inducing these pathological behaviors? Why do we take drugs? Have we really lost the people we have lost "because of drugs"? *I don't know, Rick.*

In addition, I would like to extend this discussion to psychotropic *devices*, first of all because they involve a much larger part of the world's population and allow me to include people who do not use drugs in this discussion; secondly, because the term device introduces some revealing concepts.

In Giorgio Agamben's short essay *What is an apparatus?* (Translated from Italian by D. Kishik and S. Pedatella, Stanford University, 2009), an apparatus⁵ is described as follows: "A) It is a heterogeneous set that includes virtually anything, linguistic and nonlinguistic, under the same heading: discourses, institutions, buildings, laws, police measures, philosophical propositions, and so on. The apparatus itself is **the network** that is established between these elements. B) The apparatus always has a **concrete strategic function** and is always located in a power relation. C) As such, it appears at the intersection of **power relations and relations of knowledge.**" He then continues: "I shall call an apparatus literally anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings."

By coining the term **psychotropic device**, I therefore mean a particular set of *things* intentionally moved in a normative and disciplining direction through *psychotropic action*, that is, the voluntary conditioning of the psycho-physical state of the subjects who undergo it.

Advertising (or propaganda, which is the same thing), algorithmic social networks, *total institutions*, torture, terrorism, public opinion, morality, design... are all psychotropic devices. Even the concept of "society" is one, if you like.

The psychotropic device is THE technology of domination, of its maintenance and expansion—the H-bomb of the "master's tools"

⁵ in the original essay *Che cosa è un dispositivo?* (2007) the word "apparatus" is "dispositivo" which in the common use is similar to "device" (to place/arrange/order/dispose/lay...)

and of anyone who aspires to be one. It acts contextually on the level of regulation of the individual and collective body and mind; there is no separation between *biopolitics* (Foucault) and *psychopolitics* (Byung-Chul Han), and above all, there is nothing new. Perhaps, if we really must use the word 'new' as if it were some kind of discovery, it is appropriate to refer to the scope or scale that they have now reached through industrialization and globalization.

Its fundamental characteristic is the inviolable separation between those who *activates and controls* the device and those *affected by it*.

While we may have some direct control over the use of psychotropic substances and/or commit ourselves, with all the difficulties involved, to 'managing' them in various ways, we have no control over psychotropic devices except to side with the oppressor or rise up in rebellion, even if we are still convinced, like any self-respecting drug addict, that we have no problem with it. At most, we have a few vices or unhealthy habits. Seducing and frustrating desire is the strategy for keeping the lover, as well as the consumer, at one's service. Submission is the Crack of the people; it is not established by chance or from one moment to the next. Progressive habituation is the method.

THE STRATEGY OF TENSION AND NARCOTIZATION (IN ITALY)

"The use of freedom threatens traditional powers, established authorities, and the use of freedom that tends to make every citizen a judge, preventing us from freely performing our sacrosanct functions. We are the guardians of the law, which we

want to be immutable, carved in time. The people are minors, the city is sick. Others have the task of healing, of educating... ours is to repress! Repression is our vaccine! Repression is civilization!"

Elio Petri, *Investigation of a Citizen Above Suspicion*, 1970

On the afternoon of December 12, 1969, four bombs exploded in less than an hour between Rome and Milan, killing 17 people and injuring 106. Other bombs were found unexploded in Turin and elsewhere. This marked the official beginning of the Strategy of Tension (*Strategia della Tensione*). I say canonical because if we wanted to try to understand the plots that linked the protagonists involved, we would have to go back almost thirty years, to 1942, when the "Allies" were preparing to invade Sicily. The magic word to keep in mind is 'anti-communist function'. Long before anyone knew how World War II would end, the first pieces were already being placed on the Italian peninsula in a global game in which everything was allowed except one thing: direct military confrontation. A game that seems to me to be far from over, even if it now has very little to do with ideas.

There is nothing new about unconventional or unorthodox warfare. Sun Tzu, in his famous treatise *The Art of War* (written in the 5th century BC!), outlined many of its fundamental principles, one above all: "The art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting." It seems clear that firing cannons is just as important as psychologically manipulating "the enemy." **Fear, pleasure, and confusion have been used for millennia as psychological weapons.**

The links between NATO, organized crime, neo-fascists and neo-Nazis, secret services⁶, clergy, political parties, lobbies and lodges, law enforcement agencies and armed forces, however tangled and

6. I refuse to use the adjective "deviant," because it would imply the existence of "righteous" secret services; at most, they were "parallel."

reconstructed from sources that are only provable to a certain extent, are well documented and in some cases proven. The existence of organizations such as L'Anello, Aginterre Presse, the P2 Lodge, Gladio, Rosa dei Venti, the Nuclei di Difesa dello Stato, Ordine Nuovo, and others allow us to trace a fairly explicit, albeit incomplete, picture of the political color and aims of the strategy of tension. According to the documents at our disposal, the strategy of tension was put down in black and white by Yves Guérin-Sérac (head of Aginter Presse) in 1968 in the article *Notre action politique* (Our Political Action), but had already been proposed by him to the PIDE (the secret services of the Salazar regime) in a report in October 1963 and integrated the following year:

"We believe that the first part of our political action should be to encourage the establishment of chaos in all structures of the regime. It is necessary to begin undermining the state economy in order to create confusion around the legal apparatus. [...] This will lead to a situation of great political tension and fear in the industrial world, of antipathy towards the government and all parties: in this perspective, an effective body should be ready, capable of gathering around it the discontented of all social classes: a large mass to carry out our revolution. [...] In our opinion, the first action we must take is the destruction of the state apparatus under the cover of the actions of the communists and pro-Chinese. We, on the other hand, have already infiltrated all these groups; we will obviously take action against them: propaganda and strong actions by our communist opponents and pressure on individuals who centralize power at all levels. This will create a feeling of antipathy towards those who threaten the peace of every individual and the nation; on the other hand, it will weigh on the national economy."

However, it was in 1965 that this position was presented in the Italian context. The occasion was the Conference on Revolutionary Warfare (Convegno sulla guerra rivoluzionaria), organized from May 3 to 5 by the Alberto Pollio Institute of Military Studies at the Parco dei Principi hotel in Rome. Infiltration, internal sabotage, public discrediting through violent actions and terrorism were the watchwords of anti-communist counterinsurgency operations. The long shadow of Piano Solo and the Golpe Borghese coups⁷ stemmed from conside-

7. "Piano Solo" was an envisaged plot for an Italian anti-communist coup in 1964 requested by then president of the Italian Republic, Antonio Segni. It

rations of this kind, which in turn were inspired by texts that circulated (at least initially) in the anti-communist circles of the Atlantic Pact, such as *Total Resistance: A Guerrilla Warfare Manual for Everyone - Der totale Widerstand: Eine Kleinkriegsanleitung für Jedermann* (Hans von Dach, 1957).

In the United States, starting in 1968, this became known as OPERATION CHAOS (although it had already been underway since the previous year through Project RESISTANCE and Project MERRIMAC), focusing mainly on the activities of anti-war and black liberation groups.

These types of operations were not the only ones in place, or rather, they were not approached solely on the basis of fear and terror. As I said, the control of pleasure is also an important tool. But while suspicions about the strategy of tension began to be investigated and discussed almost immediately by various parties—the book *La strage di Stato. Controinchiesta* (The State Massacre: Counter-Investigation), written in extra-parliamentary left-wing circles, dates from June 1970—it was not until the establishment of the so-called “Commissione Stragi” (Massacre Commission) in May 1988 that people began to hear about the strategy of narcotization as a parallel tool of repression.

The case was brought to light by the testimony of a member of the

was prepared by the commander of the Carabinieri, Giovanni de Lorenzo, in the beginning of 1964 in close collaboration with the Italian secret service SIFAR, CIA secret warfare expert Vernon Walters, then chief of the CIA station in Rome William King Harvey, and Renzo Rocca, director of the Gladio units within the military secret service SID. It was named “Solo” (Italian for “alone” or “only”) because it was supposed to be directed only by the Carabinieri. The “Golpe Borghese” was a failed Italian coup d'état allegedly planned for the night of 7 or 8 December 1970. It was named after Junio Valerio Borghese, wartime commander of the Decima Flottiglia MAS (a fascist death division during the WWII) and a hero in the eyes of many post-War Italian fascists. The plan of the coup in its final phase envisaged the involvement of US and NATO warships which were on alert in the Mediterranean Sea. Italian journalists have claimed the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) reportedly followed the coup, with President Richard Nixon allegedly being personally informed of it. Some pretend that the coup “failed”, but I and others like me prefer to think that it was canceled: there was no need...

Nuclei di Difesa dello Stato (State Defense Units) and external collaborator of the SID (Defense Information Service), the Italian secret service structure prior to the separation between SISMI (civilian) and SISDE (military).

P.M. – Have you ever heard of Operation Blue Moon?

R. Cavallaro – Yes. Blue Moon is an operation that was theorized and probably put into practice, at least, that was promoted by the Americans in this sense, aimed at reducing the threshold of possible resistance through the planned introduction of narcotic substances.

P.M. – Could you be more specific?

R. Cavallaro – How?

P.M. – The meaning?

R. Cavallaro – Meaning that promoting the spread of drugs would have lowered the threshold for possible rebellion among young people.

P.M. – And was this discussed in that context?

R. Cavallaro – Yes, it was discussed there too.

It is January 7, 2010 (!!!), Roberto Cavallaro is heard as a witness at the trial for the “Strage di Brescia” massacre by prosecutor Francesco Piantoni. He is the only one to publicly admit to having direct knowledge of **OPERATION BLUE MOON**, something he had already done in July 1992 and January 1996 in relation to his participation in the early 1970s in what he called the coup d’état by the Rosa Dei Venti organization. But the news went unnoticed given the intense period. Following Cavallaro’s statements, in July 1996, an investigation report was presented by the ROS⁸ Subversion Department

8 The Raggruppamento Operativo Speciale (ROS), or Special Operations Group, is part of the Italian Carabinieri. Founded on 3 December 1990 to coordinate investigative activities against organized crime, it is now the main investigative arm of the Carabinieri (the national gendarmerie of Italy, but in contrast to the Polizia di Stato, the Carabinieri are a military force separated from the Army) dealing with organized crime, “anti-terrorism” and mafia.

entitled "*Notes on psychological and low-density warfare activities carried out in Italy between 1969 and 1974 through 'AGINTER PRESSE'*", which I recommend reading in its entirety (an experience similar to a *k-hole*).

The document reports that Cavallaro stated that:

- During the training [*ndt: which he took part in in 1972 in France in the Vosges mountains*], where OPERATION BLUE MOON, conducted in Italy by the CIA and already underway, was explained, two Portuguese officers from "AGINTER PRESSE" were present;
- He believed that the French trainers were former OAS members; [*Ndt: Organisation Armée Secrète, a paramilitary organization of extreme right French organization active mainly during the Algerian War of Independence*]
- to know that there were contacts between the OAS and the Italian far right;
- that one of these contacts was the Veronese journalist RAIMONDO MELONI, a friend of the well-known TAZIO POLTRONIERI;
- JACQUES SOUSTELLE, head of the O.A.S., was linked to Colonel ADRIANO GIULIO CESARE MAGI BRASCHI. The latter emerged during investigations into right-wing subversion coordinated by the investigating judge and was identified as MALCANGI, who had learned from DIGILIO that he was a CIA agent with responsibility for operations throughout the Mediterranean. [*NDT The NATO commands of the FTASE (Allied Land Forces Southern Europe) in Verona and Vicenza also housed psychological warfare offices (Re.Gu.Psi for Italy), which had a role superior to that of the intelligence services*].
- The men who had joined the OAS were a tool for carrying out illegal activities.
- OPERATION BLUE MOON was conducted in Italy by the United States using personnel and facilities belonging to that country's official representatives in our country;
- the substances distributed were hallucinogenic and the recipients were transgressive circles;
- The instructors explained that they considered this type of destabilization unsuitable for Europe, but that some US operations had to be supported "out of consideration."

Plus other interesting things of a unique nature. It is curious to note that there is no mention of heroin, but of hallucinogens (this was 1972), whose international circulation, especially in opposition circles, was linked to a chameleon-like character with a thousand identities: **Ronald Stark**, the 'king of LSD'. The notes talk at length

about this character.

In 2013, RAI Storia broadcast an investigative documentary entitled "Operazione Blue Moon – Eroina di Stato" (Operation Blue Moon – State Heroin) for the program *Dixit - Qualcosa da dire* (Dixit - Something to Say), which traces the stages and hypotheses of the controlled distribution of narcotics in Italy in the 1970s, based on the aforementioned report and other relevant testimonies. Peter d'Angelo, director of the documentary, published the investigative novel *Il figlio peggiore* (The Worst Son) in 2024, bringing the elusive operation back to the public's attention. However, after extensive research, the only reliable source remains the voice of Cavallaro, who was also interviewed in the documentary. The long list of books and articles written over the past 30 years are a constant (often approximate or incorrect) rehashing of the ROS' Notes mixed with interviews from the documentary, particularly the curious story of the Carabinieri heroin dealers in Campo de' Fiori (Rome) told in the first person by Marcello Barghini (founder of *Stampa Alternativa - Alternative Press*). Nothing else. Or rather, nothing else that attempts to explain plausibly how it was possible for an entire generation to evaporate. I tried to line up the facts that I was able to verify.

KEY DATES:

October 22, 1954 – Italy introduces stricter penalties for narcotics (as classified by the United Nations at the time) following media uproar over a number of criminal scandals with political connections. The only previous "prohibitionist" law dated back to February 18, 1923, which punished anyone who "administered cocaine, morphine, their compounds or derivatives to the public" with a negligible penalty ranging from two to six months' imprisonment and a fine of between one thousand and four thousand lire (the Italian currency in use before euros).

Between 1954 and 1962 – The Geneva Accords of July 1954 put an end to the formal existence of French Indochina after a war that lasted eight years. During this period, the elements of what would later be called the "French connection" began to take shape, a veritable heroin supply chain that started in the "Golden Triangle" and reached North America via the Mediterranean (Istanbul, Beirut, Palermo, and Marseille). International secret services and organized crime, both local and international (Corsicans, Marseillais, and the

Cosa Nostra), all passionately contributed to financing the French military occupation ceased in the territories that would later be involved in the American war (as they call it in Vietnam) on the one hand and, on the other hand, flooded the streets of the ghettos and the veins of the "rebels" with opium derivatives throughout the West. On April 5, 1971, a certain Roger de Louette was arrested in a port near New York with 44 kg of heroin worth \$12 million. He was a French counterintelligence agent who claimed to be working on the direct orders of Colonel Fournier Dubois of the SDECE.

1968 - protest movements across the West make their grand debut. The combination of rebellion and experimentation with substances is undeniable. We are at a turning point in the Vietnam War and the global spread of Maoism and pacifism. In the early months of the year, the Tet Offensive deals a severe psychological and moral blow to Western imperialism, and this enthusiasm spreads like a virus among the far left and opposition circles. The oppressed begin to rise up almost everywhere, each in their own way.

March 20, 1970 - Following a tip-off, the Carabinieri anti-drug squad, led by Giancarlo Servolini, raids the boat "New Sporting Club" anchored on the Tiber, where around 90 young people are having a party, allegedly involving drugs. Over the next six months, around 10,000 articles on drug use among young people appeared in the national press. But only a few marijuana "crumbs" were found on the boat. The association of long-haired, subversive drug addicts became the editorial line. The case seemed to have been fabricated. December 7-8, 1970 - Valerio Junio Borghese attempts a coup (which is canceled after the fact). In the speech he would have read live on television, he referred to Italians as "a people of drug addicts devastated by narcotics and communism." Even if, communism aside, all these drugs weren't really there.

April 19, 1972 - Valsecchi Law, also Italy bans amphetamines, one of the last countries in the world to do so, with a large number of European countries having already done so 34 years earlier. Until then, pharmaceutical preparations based on amphetamines and similar substances (such as the ephedrine contained in "Cachet Fiat") had been sold and advertised without any problem. Production was necessary. In the same year, there was a peak in arrests for marijuana, which became impossible to find for several months. In its place, high-quality morphine could be found for free in Italian squares - classic marketing shit.

May 23, 1973 – A bizarre article appears on the front page of *Corriere della Sera* entitled "Drugs: a trap for tourists in Rome. According to the American embassy, drug dealers are 'spies'." No others follow.

1974 – The narcotics squad makes 2,000 arrests for marijuana. Morphine suddenly disappears from the streets. Something new and unknown begins to appear: heroin. For drug addicts, as they were classified at the time, there is no choice. However, according to reconstructions, it is not the usual circle of (more or less) organized crime that is dealing the drug. The microscopic doses – another very well-calibrated placement strategy – that begin to appear come from small dealers who are not affiliated with anyone and are completely unconnected to the trafficking, covered, it was said, by the services or even by undercover Carabinieri agents.



On an unspecified date in the **summer of 1974**, Marcello Barghini and other colleagues from *Stampa Alternativa* organize a photo shoot with internationally renowned model and actress Luna Donyale, Federico Fellini's muse, in Piazza Campo de' Fiori (pictured here posing under the statue of Giordano Bruno) in Rome. For three days, the comrades used the set to monitor and investigate the activities of three 'coatti', the only heroin dealers in the capital. On the third day, according to Barghini's testimony reported in the Rai documentary, they are recognized and approached by a sort of spokesperson for the "coati"(thugs) who warns Baraghini not to go after the three and to let it go because "it was an operation that was far above them and involved the Secret Services." Baraghini, well aware of the Carabinieri's infiltration activities, calling them 'carabinieri-coatti', in the circles of the smalltime underworld in the streets and in the movement, asserts that it is entirely plausible that the secret services or Carabinieri agents were the conduit for the first heroin dealing in the capital.

Five years later, Luna Donyale died of a heroin overdose in a clinic in Rome.

1975 (date not traceable) – Commissioner Ennio di Francesco, of the narcotics squad, manages to seize '3 boccioni' (about 2kg) of 'particularly strong, wellmade' heroin in a bar. Before there is even time to analyze the recovered substance, the investigation is closed and the commissioner transferred.

February 15, 1975 – The Bologna police arrest the Abbotts for possession of several stolen cars. Following an investigation, it emerges that Terence William Abbot is just one of Ronald Stark's many identities. Stark is investigated for several drug-related crimes. During his detention, plausibly intentional, in Pisa prison, he approached Renato Curcio (one of the founders of the Red Brigades), who was detained in the same wing. In 1978, Stark was accused of "participation in an armed gang" after being identified by a member of Azione Rivoluzionaria as the supplier of a map of a paramilitary training camp in Lebanon. In April 1979, released on bail, he told the Carabinieri in Florence that he could be contacted through the US consulate. An article published in *Il Resto del Carlino* newspaper in March 1979 reported that Stark, under the false identity of KHOURY ALI, a self-proclaimed Palestinian exile, had frequented Milanese far-left circles between 1968 and 1971. The documentation available to the police confirmed this fact and subsequently also other direct and indirect links with the US secret services, figures in international drug trafficking such as Pablo Escobar (in 1994, even though the CIA declared him dead on May 8, 1984, in San Francisco) and counterculture figures such as Timothy Leary. A nice guy, in short.

December 22, 1975 – new prohibitionist law and strict repression regarding narcotic and psychotropic substances. The penalties increase from three to eight years' imprisonment in 1954 to four to fifteen years for those who "without authorization, produce, manufacture, extracts, offers, sells, distributes, purchases, transfers or receives for any reason, procures for others, transports, imports, exports, transits or illegally possesses (...) narcotic or psychotropic substances." At the end of the year, there are 28 deaths from heroin overdose.

1977 – There are 20,000-30,000 heroin users in Italy. Overdose deaths begin to number in the dozens each year. But the media, health institutions, and law enforcement agencies talk almost exclusively about the catastrophic damage caused by marijuana and its derivatives. More and more people are turning to heroin, intimidated by media campaigns against cannabinoids.

1977 – Scotland Yard arrests Richard Kemp, Stark's chemist, in France and seizes 6 million doses of LSD. It is established that Kemp, through at least four laboratories discovered in Belgium in 1972, was responsible for producing 50% of the world's LSD in the mid-1970s. March 18, 1978 – Fausto and laio, both 18 years old, are murdered not far from the Leoncavallo social center in Milan, where they were activists. Shortly before, the two had actively contributed to the creation of the *Dossier Eroina* (Heroin Dossier), a publication "edited by the autonomous communist collectives and the Center for the Fight Against and Information on Heroin" containing names, addresses, photographs, connections, criminal records, and files on the activities of all Milanese drug dealers, but also an introduction, which deserves to be transcribed in its entirety, on heroin and its social and political implications. The accusation is peremptory: it is state murder. However, the movement is also under accusation, as in ten years it has still not fully understood what is happening, how to deal with drugs, with those who use them and those who deal them. Nothing is known. There are widespread suspicions and speculations that the fascists are involved, but nothing is clear. The death toll continues to rise, almost every family in Italy knows that something serious is happening, it is there for all to see. No one discusses heroin publicly.

1978 - Vincenzo Muccioli founds the San Patrignano Community in the province of Rimini. Since its foundation and throughout its "rehabilitation" and "recovery" activities, it has received €286 million in funding from the Moratti family. Its "methods" become (sadly) proverbial.

December 24, 1979 - The USSR invades Afghanistan (1979-1989). Almost simultaneously, Operation Cyclone (which had already been under discussion in previous months) officially begins, a program of systematic funding for the mujahideen in an anti-Soviet capacity, developed and implemented by the CIA and friends (including the MOSSAD, MI6, the Pakistani ISI, the Egyptian GIS, etc.). Who knows what they had to trade for weapons in those parts...

August 2, 1980 – the Strage di Bologna massacre, in which 85 people were killed and around 200 injured, is considered the end of the so-called strategy of tension. We know very well that it was not the end of anything, least of all the massacres.

1981 – People begin to talk about AIDS. In 1983, there are four cases

in Italy, one of whom is homosexual; in 1984, there are 18 cases, one of whom is a drug addict... In a short time, the deviant-addict-subversive combination returns to dominate this round with the addition of 'sick'.

In the **mid-1980s**, there were 300,000 heroin addicts, with 247 deaths in 1985. In 1990, there were 1,161. It was a massacre.

December 26, 1991 - The Soviet Union is officially dissolved. It is the end of the Cold War (?) and a few years later, the "Prima Repubblica" (ndt "First Republic" is an Italian media expression which refers to the political system of the Italian Republic in force between 1946 and 1994) would also come to an end. But no war ever really ends; there are always consequences and latent responses... a whole series of new protagonists, uprisings, movements, and substances were about to emerge... nothing is created, nothing is destroyed, everything is transformed, even wars, indeed, especially wars, but they never really change.

Systematic mutilation (including psychological mutilation) is a much more effective war strategy than eliminating the enemy. In prisons and CPRs, it is often used in a coercive manner. Those who have experienced such depths know that death is not the worst thing that can happen to you. Psycho-emotional mutilation requires a rehabilitation period that often never comes, mainly because the violence suffered is hidden, distracted, numbed, and above all disorienting.

Was there really a specific operation called Blue Moon orchestrated by the CIA?

According to declassified reports and official statements by US intelligence services, officially no, it is not even mentioned by mistake. It is possible that a dense network of cover-ups, infiltrators, misdirection, 'external' agents and members of law enforcement agencies or international intelligence services cooperated (also) with the aim of undermining youth political participation through the controlled distribution of narcotics? Absolutely yes, the narcotics strategy, or narcotization, is more than plausible.

If we move to the United States, this is confirmed by documents made public by the *United States President's Commission on CIA*

Activities within the United States, known as the *Rockefeller Commission*, ordered by President Gerald Ford on January 4, 1975. These publications reveal that since the early 1950s, the FBI (through the activities of COINTELPRO) and the CIA (through operations such as MKULTRA, CHAOS, and others) worked to distribute and promote, through more or less aware exponents of the counterculture, the use of psychotropic substances for repressive purposes in "subversive" and opposition circles (clearly left-wing): **LSD to the whites, heroin to the negroes**. Numerous studies show that the Black Panther Party was dismantled (also) through this tactic. Its founder, Huey P. Newton, fell victim to it himself and in 1980 published a doctoral thesis entitled *War against the Panthers: A study of repression in America* in which he clearly exposed the matter. By the end of the 1970s, it was already considered a fact (it is also mentioned in the Dossier Eroina). Then came Crack. The theory of an intentional crack epidemic in American ghettos in the 1980s and 1990s remained a conspiracy theory for more than a decade, after which the CIA and the DEA had to admit – under pressure from independent investigations (the 'Freeway' Rick Ross case) and part of civil society – that they had actively collaborated in bringing low-cost cocaine into their own country, partly to finance the activities of the Contras (1979-1990) in Nicaragua in their anti-Sandinista campaign. So much for the *War on Drugs*.

Moreover, there is a whole chapter to be written on the role of international drug trafficking linked to "terrorism" ... and another on the constant change in the type, quality, and methods of access to and consumption of psychotropic substances over the last 30 years and their social and cultural impact – emblematic of this is the shift from injected to smoked heroin, the arrival of ketamine, the exponential increase in THC concentration, the introduction of electronic cigarettes, the Fentanyl phenomenon, the growing spread of psychotropic drugs for 'recreational' use, especially among the very young, and others still – but I would never finish and I feel I have already put several, perhaps too many, topics on the table.

The control and use of psychotropic substances in military and political contexts is an indisputable and undeniable fact, just as the widespread interest in experimenting with altered states of consciousness and the desire for freedom are indisputable. There is no doubt about it and no evidence is needed to prove it; it is an ancient story.

Is a sort of Operation Blue Moon still underway? How do drugs really get into our cities? What is the relationship between prohibition/legality and social control? Why does no one talk about it seriously? I have no clues or hypotheses, only many more questions and doubts.

The line between conspiracy theory and what we call history is very blurred. It is interesting to note that there is always a latency period of decades between what is a suspicion and then historiography. Regardless of our very personal take on the subject, I think it is worth spending the last few lines on an issue that cuts across the whole topic: the role of the mass media.

ISOLATED, NOT FEW.

“The logic of war and the logic of communication feed off each other constantly: during military operations, means of communication are tested and, at the same time, communication finds in war the most suitable context to enhance the role and social use of the media.”

- N. Labanca and C. Zadra, *Costruire un nemico. Studi di storia della propaganda di guerra* (Building an Enemy. Studies in the History of War Propaganda), 2012

We do not all have the same weight on this bizarre blue rock; we all participate in shaping the world, but however impactful even a loving whisper may be, our perception of reality, and consequently our behavior, is perpetually conditioned by a series of devices controlled by specific forces. Again, there is nothing new here; persua-

sion (rhetoric) is an ancient art that has adapted to technical and scientific "progress" and its impact on social organization. The real turning point was the emergence of mass society and its 'culture' in the second half of the 19th century. From that moment on, propaganda became something radically different.

The term **propaganda** refers to "the dissemination [or restriction] of ideas and information with the aim of inducing specific attitudes and actions," that is, the "conscious, methodical, and planned use of persuasion techniques to achieve specific objectives that benefit those who organize the process." It seems to me that this is practically all I have been talking about. It was precisely during this period that the concepts of "public opinion," "public relations," "crowd psychology," "advertising," "mass media," and so on were born, leading to "manufacturing consent," "society of spectacle," "performance society," and so forth. The magical power of words, narrative, imagination, and information, recognized since the dawn of time, now has an industrial scale and organization and, as such, is administered at the lobbying and multinational level: an oligopoly. Every single word in our vocabulary is a very, very concrete battlefield with fronts in constant motion, driven by specific intentions. Abstract and intangible concepts that induce real behavior. **If the scale is industrial, the conditioning is mass.** The real trick, ingenious if you will, is not to clash over the meaning of each individual concept, which is far too demanding, but, as Sun Tzu would say, to master the terrain, to own it, to define it. In the *Plan for Democratic Rebirth* of the P2 Lodge (which, coincidentally, stands for Propaganda2) – a document seized from Licio Gelli's daughter in July 1982 and probably drafted by the Venerable Master in 1976 – this emerges with great clarity.⁹

9. Licio Gelli was an Italian Freemason and businessman. A fascist volunteer in his youth, he is chiefly known for his role in the Banco Ambrosiano scandal and in the Bologna massacre. He was revealed in 1981 as being the Venerable Master of the clandestine Masonic lodge Propaganda Due (P2). He was one of the most sinister and mysterious figures in Italian history, but telling his biography would be too long and complex. In 2003, Licio Gelli argued that the coincidence of certain parts of the "Plan" (Plan for Democratic Rebirth - Piano di Rinascita Democratica) with the programmes of the current parties was not a coincidence. In an interview in October 2008, he later stated that, although all the political forces had taken inspiration from the Plan (so much so as to induce him to ironically claim the copyright), Silvio Berlusconi was the only one who could implement it (which was also a member of the P2 lodge)

It is irrelevant that *terrorism* has no universal legal definition, that the definition of “stupefacente” (narcotics) is arbitrary, that the pathological condition of *toxic addicts* is politically and socially connoted, or that the crack *epidemic* is not really an epidemic because it only affects a particular group of people. What matters is that it is discussed in controlled and controllable environments. The possibility of accessing, participating in, and potentially modifying the definitions of anything is a mere illusion if we do not question the environment (the terrain) of the hypothetical confrontation. But there is difference between illusion and reality. **Everything that produces concrete effects is real**

Whoever controls the terrain and the “rules” that govern it has already won, regardless of whether they choose to participate in the battle and regardless of their specific positions. Anyone who masters, more or less visibly (although invisibility is always an advantage), *how and where* an idea or information is processed governs the behavior that will result from it, which is the real goal of everything. The much-vaunted and debated freedom of expression is nonsense, even ridiculous when it comes to algorithmic social networks. ‘Our’ assemblies are no different in this respect.

What is uncontrollable territory? The dimension of proximal encounters, tactile proximity, encounters in non-digital reality, informal exchanges. Only there can conflict take on its most sincere and honest, unmediated form, or rather, where the direction of the discourse is continuously negotiated and negotiable—which does not mean that it can never be violent, but at least it is a violence that we choose ourselves, for which we have direct and full responsibility. But all this is terrifying, conflict is terrifying, responsibility is something to be avoided, we are not literate in indeterminacy, in the unknown, in freedom. Indeed, it is very easy to want to oppress and command in response to the perennial feeling of oppression that weighs on us. Consuming, even for just a moment, gives us the impression that we have some choice, at least about ourselves. But this is not the case; at a certain point, you are no longer choosing. It is not what you choose that makes the difference, but the fact that you satisfy that need for escape through a very specific and habitual behavior, whether it be alcohol, heroin, crack, a haircut, fourteen cigarettes a minute, a fucking bigscreen TV, a new partner because the old one has simply ceased to be ‘new’, a beautiful and interesting new TV series that is very profound and touching, a new cycle of therapy sessions with a highly qualified professional with excel-

lent reviews from friends and relatives, who will talk to you about anything except the one thing that would make sense to start shouting in the streets: *I'm a human being, goddammit. My life has value! I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take this any more!*¹⁰

And there, facing each other in the commonality of our particular pain, we meet and begin to conspire and act. We begin to resist.

"One fact is clear: we are isolated—which does not mean: we are few."

- Anonymous, *At Daggers Drawn with the Existent, its Defenders and its False Critics*, 1998

Isolation and loneliness play a significant role in the processing of all experiences involving the natural or induced production of neurotransmitters— substances such as serotonin and dopamine, to name a few. Serotonin receptors are found in the central and peripheral nervous systems, on the cell membranes of nerve cells, and in other types of cells. Serotonin receptors influence various biological and neurological processes, such as aggression, anxiety, appetite, cognitive functions, learning, memory, mood, nausea, sleep, and thermoregulation, but also sexuality, empathy, and creativity. In short, practically everything. Guess which receptors psychotropic substances act on to produce that sensation in the tongue that we enjoy so much? Serotonin receptors, of course (in many different ways, obviously).

Have you ever noticed the difference in your mood the morning after, depending on whether you are alone or have someone around, or whether that someone around you is a particularly pleasant presence? Feelings of depression, anxiety, worry, or agitation are no coincidence. Nor is it a coincidence that hangovers (not just from alcohol) are much more tolerable when faced with "positive" people around you. But most of us live in isolation, in unpleasant situations, or at least have no one around us the morning after, let alone someone positive. Precariousness and misery are not accidental, they are

10. Quote from the movie *The Network* by Sidney Lumet, 1976

necessary to systems of domination, and consumption is a social lubricant, indeed the *social occasion* that keeps the whole thing going. Meeting or spending more than 10 minutes together without consuming anything is a truly strange, uncomfortable feeling, bordering on alienating.

"It seems very unlikely that humanity in general will ever be able to do without Artificial Paradises. Most men and women lead lives that are, at worst, so painful, and at best so monotonous, poor, and limited, that the desire to escape, the urge to transcend oneself, even for a few moments, is, and always has been, one of the soul's primary needs."

— Aldous Huxley, *The Doors of Perception*, 1954

There is nothing more miserable than accepting reality.

The best cure for a hangover is to start drinking again. I have no idea how many times I've heard, said, and done this myself. But it's true. Except that tolerance thresholds, addiction, and dependence are also very real. But if you're alone, you either put up with the discomfort or go out and get a fix or find some other way to be in company. In the long run, it's unsustainable, especially if the people you're with are like you and want what you want. In the end, the use of psychotropic substances becomes an emotional substitute, without which we feel nothing and have no interest in socializing.

Substances aside, the same applies to psychotropic devices, because they have the same effect, acting on the same receptors. The big difference is that the collective or community aspect associated with psychotropic substance use in the case of *devices* are virtually non-existent, we are subject to their action tendentially in isolation. Social networks and contemporary advertising are even packaged and tailored to suit individual needs while maintaining their universal internal architecture: what we experience is personalized, how it is standardized, the social effect is GUARANTEED, and the status quo is protected.

Does it matter who pulls the strings, where they pull them, and why they pull them? I don't really care, let everyone make up their own mind about it. What interests me is to stop being pulled and to continue to see people being pulled into doing things they don't want to do (anymore).

What I am really asking myself and asking you is: if, overnight, psychotropic substances and devices suddenly disappeared, how long would it take for the powder keg we are walking on to explode?

I would like to see much more discussion on this issue, and better discussion than I have attempted to present here. I would like to see the movement(s) avoid making the same mistakes as 50 years ago and, above all, I would like to see our pain not remain deaf, blind, mute, and isolated in the face of all this. Not least because it is right under everyone's nose and in everyone's hands.

The only culture we need is one that serves to not to serve.

Knowledge is not meant to understand, but to take a stand.

Insurrection against the devices of domination is a material and, at the same time, a psychological necessity.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read my words, which I hope have lived up to my initial promises. If you would like to contribute your thoughts or experiences, you can write an email to robinbookgang@gmail.com, whose members are willing to collect any material that could further the conversation and circulate it through their channels, if you wish, of course.

*From the deepest of my heart,
with all my closeness
and solidarity.*

Z. R.

February 2025

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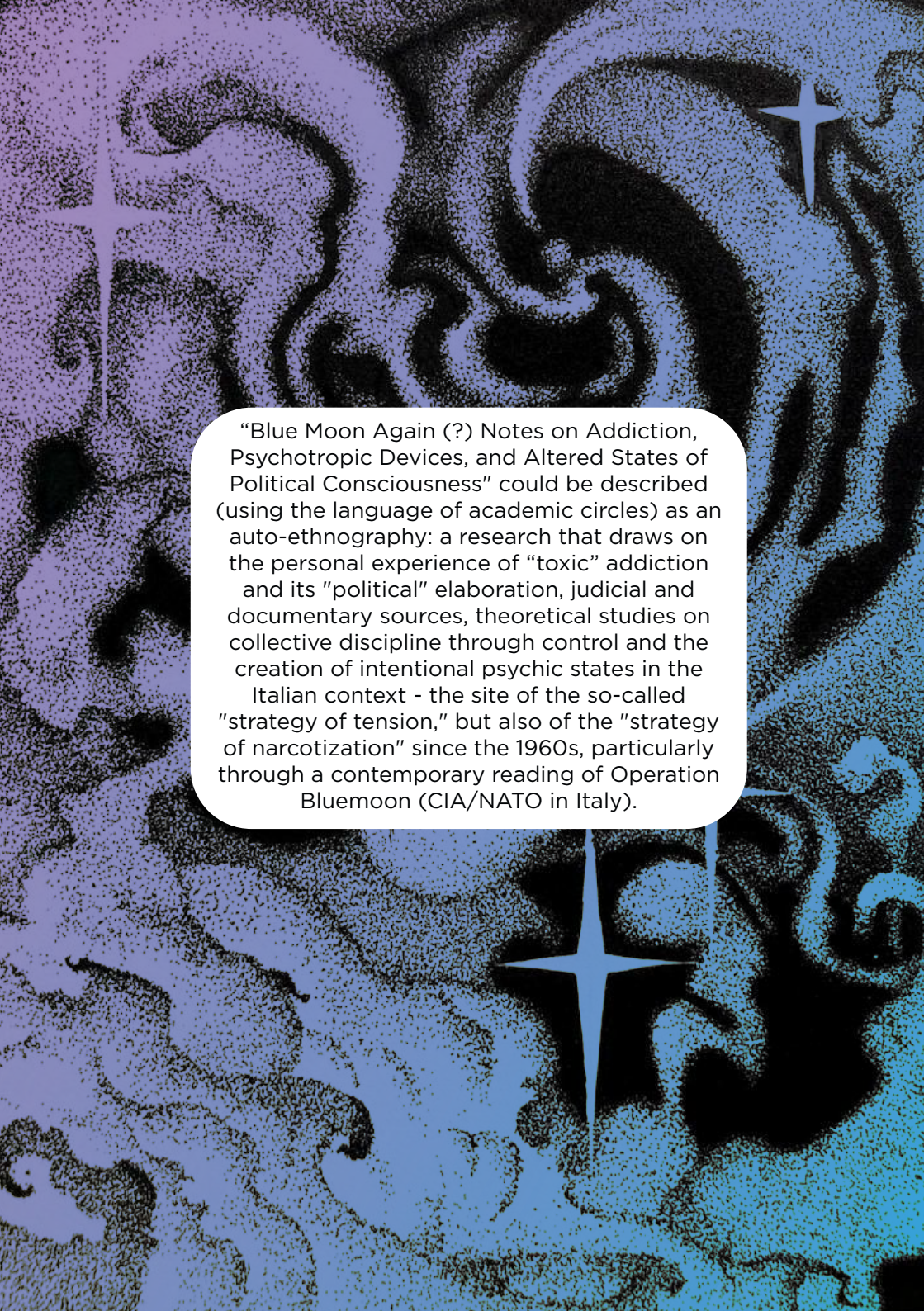
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